

You're Hired! success knows no limitations!

BY BERNICE REED AND
PATRICIA RIDEOUT

That is this year's National Disability Employment Awareness Month theme.

Stacy Gatling is an excellent example of disability employment in action. She has been hired many times. She was hired at William Beaumont Army Medical Center; she was hired at the Kirtland AFB Hospital; she was hired at Base Supply, Kirtland AFB; and was hired at the AFRL Satellite Assessment Center, Kirtland AFB. Stacy is currently an Administrative Professional at AFRL.

Ms. Gatling is legally blind due to oculocutaneous albinism. Her blindness is part of being albino and is non-correctable due to lack of pigmentation in her eyes. Lighting plays a big part in her vision due to lack of pigmentation which helps filter lighting. Her vision is 20/200. Stacy can't drive and carpools with co-workers.

Ms. Gatling has not had face-to-face interviews for a job. Her interviews have been on the phone or selection by her written qualifications. She has always felt obligated to let a potential supervisor know about her condition and she could feel the "shut-off."

Ms. Gatling has had to use magnifiers and telescopic glasses to assist her vision. She has been accommodated with a CCTV which scans documents and projects them onto a screen/monitor. When her old

monitor gave out, a co-worker suggested getting a Plasma 42- inch screen to assist Stacy in her duties. Funding was found and she received the 42-inch monitor. This was such a good idea that her organization was inspired to acquire the Plasma 42-inch screens for others in the organization to help them with imaging in their development programs.

When asked what kind of employee she is, Lt. Col. Quentin Dierks, her supervisor, says that the number of awards Stacy has received speaks for itself. He states that her work is outstanding and the quality is above her position description. Colonel Dierks recommends that supervisors consider each person's capabilities and potential. Colonel Dierks says the physical challenges do not tell all and encourages supervisors to look at hiring disabled employees.

Currently, Stacy's work incorporates assumed extra duties including IMPAC cards, monitoring the Student Temporary Employment Program, maintaining travel spreadsheets, appointment calendars and conference room schedules, and filling out timesheets. Her supervisor, Colonel Dierks, refers to her as the caregiver for more than 30 employees consisting of civilians, mili-

tary and contractors. Because of her outstanding performance her position description will be reviewed and re-written to reflect the true extent of the work she does. The intent is to upgrade her position.

Ms. Gatling has been married for 22 years and has three children and two grandchildren. She has one son that is also legally blind due to being albino and she has a brother who is also albino.

Ms. Gatling credits all her accomplishments to God who "gave her the greatest mother a child could have." She says her mother insisted on treating her and also

her brother as "normal" and taught them more than anyone could imagine. Ms. Gatling and her brother attended public schools. Her mother allowed them to ride bikes even though the State Commission for the Blind objected.

When she isn't working or homemaking, Ms. Gatling volunteers time for Under the Influence

Ministries twice a year for ten weeks, teaching women computer skills.

To get up to date information on disability in employment issues go to the U.S. Department of Labor web page: www.dol.gov

"Physical challenges do not tell all and encourages supervisors to look at hiring disabled employees."

Lt. Col. Quentin Dierks



Photo by Todd Berenger

Bidding for bargains for charity

Ceremonial checks to the Air Force Aid Society and Casa Esperanza in the amount of \$950 to each charity were presented by Col. Hank Andrews, 377th Air Base Wing commander. The checks represent proceeds from a silent auction sponsored by the Company Grade Officers Council at the Air Force birthday ball, Sept. 18, at Kirtland AFB. Casa Esperanza is a "home away from home" lodging facility for families with members receiving medical care. The Air Force Aid Society provides financial assistance to military families in crisis situations. Left to right are Capt. Christine Benjamin, CGOC auction chairwoman, Serena Talamantes of Casa Esperanza, Colonel Andrews, Teresa Reinhard, representing the Air Force Aid Society, and Capt. Russell Burks, Air Force Ball project officer. Total proceeds from the auction were \$2,000 before event expenses were paid.

Service launches online pay enhancements

The online pay account information system of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, myPay, is offering new enhancements and upgrades for all users.

All myPay users can now assign a restricted access personal identification number to a designated individual to view pay information; however, the designee

cannot make any changes to the allotments or account information. Users also can add a personal e-mail address so they are notified of pay changes and other items of interest.

Also, active-duty Airmen can view 12 months of leave and earning statements, and start, stop and

change financial allotments and savings bonds.

Currently, myPay has nearly 3 million users with customized PINs and serves all servicemembers, military retirees and annuitants, Department of Defense civilian employees and Department of Energy employees.